

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 3, 2015 5:15 PM

City Council Chambers

Minutes

Committee Members Present: Councilor Baldacci, Councilor Civiello, Councilor Faircloth, Councilor Graham, and Councilor Nealley

City Staff Present: Tanya Emery and Jason Bird

Chair Baldacci called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

1. **PUBLIC HEARING** – Amount of Federal Community Development Block Grant Funds expected to be available for the Period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016 and the Eligible Uses of Community Development Funds

The Public Hearing was opened.

Jason Bird, Community and Economic Development Officer, explained the CDBG Program and the eligible uses for the CDBG Grant Funds to be available from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2015. This public hearing is part of the yearly formal public process.

Mr. Bird indicated that every five years HUD asks that a new five year plan be done which demonstrates how the City envisions the CDBG monies received will be spent. This has given staff an opportunity to go out into the community and meet with various stakeholders to assess what the needs are. The Plan is not set and staff is still seeking input.

Committee Members had questions regarding the amount of funds available. Director Emery indicated that the City will be receiving approximately \$780,000 which is close to what the City received the previous year. In addition, Staff is projecting program income (which is derived from repayment of loans made through the City's Community Development Residential Property Rehabilitation and Business Development loan programs) to be approximately \$250,000 for a total of about one million dollars.

Chair Baldacci opened the discussion up to those in the audience. Bruce Campbell, Chairman of the Board of the Bangor Area Rehabilitation Network (BARN), indicated that safe and sober housing is a challenge to the recovery

community. He discussed their long-range sustainability plan to rehabilitate properties to make them an income source. They have some resources to partner with others to acquire these real assets. He expressed his support for the proposed 5 Year Plan and indicated that he felt that there is partnering potential.

Kara Hay, CEO of Penquis, indicated that she supports much of the 5 year plan. Penquis is interested in investing in existing housing that may be vacant or need rehabilitation. She indicated that there are several other partners in the community that could collectively make this happen. She also discussed various housing projects that they have done and are currently involved with.

Councilor Nealley asked about other partners. Director Emery indicated that there are a group of stakeholders (Patty Hamilton with the City's Health and Community Services Department, Dennis Marble with the Bangor Shelter, Kara Hay from Penquis, and a representative of Eastern Maine Development Corporation) who have been meeting regularly. They have identified several pieces and are working on how to put those pieces together into one. It's a comprehensive approach with much staff effort. This concept is a good way to reuse underutilized buildings. Chair Baldacci indicated that he appreciated this focus and the need for this type of housing.

Director Emery also discussed the various eligible activities that could be funded through CDBG funds.

There being no further comments, the Public Hearing was closed.

2. Greater Bangor Convention & Visitors Bureau (GBCVB) Update

Kerrie Tripp and Lee Speronis with the GBCVB attended. Ms. Tripp discussed their quarterly report which was provided to the Committee prior to the meeting. She outlined and discussed recent events, an increase in memberships, and their efforts for procuring future events. She also discussed the 2015 Visitors Guide.

Lee Speronis also spoke about the GBCVB's increase in activities, the revenues that they create, and the benefits to the area.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.